(b) what are the sites where the deposts of crude oil have already been found;

(c) what plan is being made to exploit such deposits of oil;

(d) what are the financial estimates required for exploiting this oil; and

(e) by when the work would begin?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (CAPT. SATISH SHARMA): (a) Surveys are presently continuing in the sedimentary basins of Cambay, Upper-Assam, Assam-Arakan Fold Belt, Krishna-Godavari, Cauvery, Rajasthan, Bengal, Himalayan Foothills & Ganga Valley in the onland and Western and Eastern Offshore areas.

(b) Hydrocarbons have already been discovered in the sedimentary basins of Cambay, Upper-Assam, Assam-Arakan Fold Belt, Rajasthan, Krishna Godavari, Cauvery and Western and Eastern Offshore areas.

(c) With a view to increase oil production ONGC Ltd. and OIL have made extensive programmes for development of these fields. To further supplement the efforts of ONGC Ltd. and OIL, the Govt. of India have invited bid offers from private and foreign companies for development of 73 small and medium sized fields in the first and second rounds.

(d) For exploitation of oil and gas fields ONGC Ltd. and OIL have proposed a total outlay of Rs. 13,535.62 crores for the remaining period of VIII Plan (1994-95 to 1996-97).

(e) Both exploration and exploitation for hydrocarbons are continuing.

Establishment of a National Grid for Distribution of Natural Gas

2993. SHRI ASHOK MITRA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government would be agreeable to consider the establishment of a national grid for the distribution of natural gas;

(b) whether pipelines to the southern and eastern regions are proposed to be laid as an integral element of such a national grid; and

(c) whether it is proposed to enforce, as a matter of principle, a uniform price for natural gas all over the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (CAPT. SATISH SHARMA): (a) and (b) At present, there is no proposal for establishing a National Grid. However, the concept of laying a natural gas pipeline to the Southern States from the West Coast has been accepted in principle.

(c) uniform landfall price of gas has been fixed at present all over the country except for the North Eastern States where a concessional price has been allowed in order to encourage the utilisation of gas in the North-East.

Proposal for production of Linear Alkyl Benzene in Haldia Oil Refinery

2994. SHRI DIPANKAR MUKHERJEE: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal for production of value added product like Linear Alkyl Benzene (LAB) in Haldia Oil Refinery; if so, what is the potential for making this product at Haldia;

(b) whether any cost benefit analysis has been made; if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Micro Crystalline Wax is a bye-product at Haldia Oil Refinery; if so, whether this is being commercially marketed; if not, the reasons therefor; and

(d) whether there is any proposal of setting up a fluidised Catalyst Cracking Unit; if not, the reasons therefor?